


03-11



ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Monthly Report -- Bangkok Bureau

FROM:

EXTENSION

NO.

Chief, Operations Group

DATE

October 1988

STAT

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

1.

C/Ops

28 Nov [initials]

2.

3.

C/E&PS

11/28 [initials]

4.

~~DD/FBIS~~

5.

AD/FBIS

28 Nov B

6.

7.

PO/RA

11/29 [initials]

8.

SA/CD

11/30 [initials]

9.

10.

C/AS

12/2 [initials]

- NOTE TECH SECT. on PARTS/RIR [initials]

11.

DC/AS

C/B&F/AS

12.

13.

14.

C/AG

12/12 [initials]

15.

Exec. Reg.

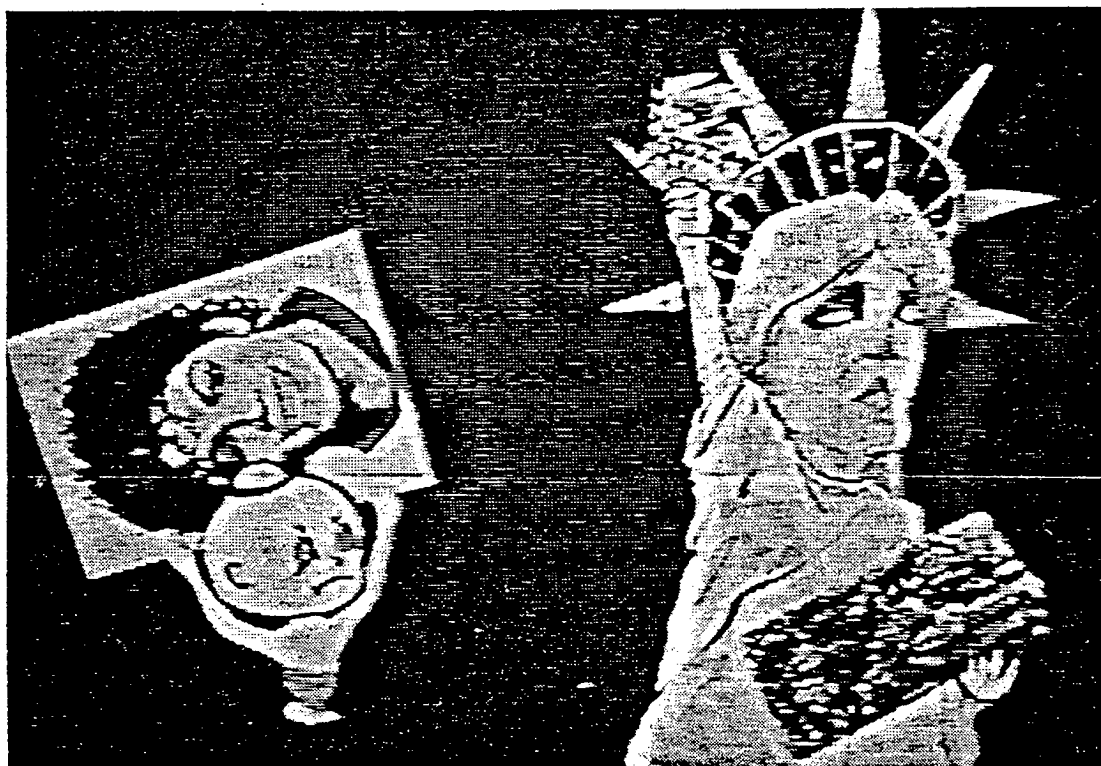
2 November 1988
FBIS-3221-88

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service
THROUGH: Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT: Monthly Report -- Bangkok Bureau -- October 1988

I. GENERAL

A. Thailand's Prime Minister Chatchai Chunhawan, in an interview with a local magazine, stated that his biggest concern is "the possibility of a coup d'etat to overthrow the newly-established democracy." Despite the fact that Army Commander in Chief General Chawalit Yongchaiyut has repeatedly pledged that the military would not stage a coup, the prime minister was concerned enough to state that "I fear that while we are raising the flag of democracy, the flag pole will be cut." In connection with this, the Thai Section translated a 7-take item on the transfers of 276 of Thailand's special Army colonels, whose hold over field command posts, according to the newspaper Matichon, "has made them important parties to past military takeovers." The paper viewed the reshuffle as an attempt by General Chawalit to consolidate his power base.

B. In the meantime, Thailand's campaign for the return of the Vishnu Lintel from the Chicago Art Institute is headed for the top ten on the local hit parade, as evidenced below:



LINTEL SONG...A cartoon spot broadcast on TV features a Thai boy throwing a picture of Michael Jackson at the Statue of Liberty holding the Vishnu lintel while the Carabao pop group sings, "Take back your Michael Jackson and give us back our Vishnu lintel." The spot promotes a new album by the group that campaigns for the return of the lintel.

C. On the local weather front, predictions of the worst floods to hit Bangkok in years turned out to be highly exaggerated, although 3 days of heavy rain in mid-month left some sections of the city under water. While it was business as usual at the bureau, some employees were either stranded in their homes or took two or more hours to make their way to work. One individual looked out her window to see her house surrounded by water, made the mistake of opening the door, and watched her cat float into the living room as the water poured in.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. All of the Indochina and ASEAN countries carried extensive reportage and commentary on the Jakarta Informal Meeting on Cambodia, which the Khmer Rouge delegation boycotted.

2. On the Lao-Thai front, a Lao military delegation led by General Sisavat Keobounphan visited Bangkok 17-19 October and called on Prime Minister Chatchai Chunhawan, while a Thai military delegation led by Army Commander in Chief General Chawalit Yongchaiyut paid a visit to Laos 29-30 October. The exchange of visits was for the purpose of resolving the border dispute between the two countries.

3. The two-person Burmese Unit and its part-time contract employee were kept busy keeping up with events in that country, with some 65 political parties now registered for the elections scheduled to take place some time after the first of the year.

4. Among other events in Vietnam, the Council of State issued a communique stating that the "fourth session of the Eighth National Assembly" would be convened in mid-December, the Socialist and Democratic Parties ceased to exist, and flash floods from a typhoon killed 100 people and swept away "hundreds of thousands of houses" in the central provinces.

B. Communications

1. The LEC contractor returned to the bureau 19 October-1 November to install the A-Net software upgrade package in FBA-1. Hopefully, the upgrade will stabilize the LAN and prevent the numerous crashes the bureau has been experiencing.

2. On 11 separate days during the month, the bureau experienced circuit outages due to problems at Embassy commo, Clark, or Guam.

C. Lateral Services

1. At AG's request, Vietnamese Unit Chief [redacted] provided an analysis of Vietnamese State Council Chairman Vo Chi

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Cong's September visit to the USSR. A copy of Vinh's report was provided to the Embassy Political Section, which expressed its appreciation for the "well thought-out and documented analysis of USSR-SRV relations."

2: At the ambassador's request, AG provided the Embassy with a chronology of SRV statements on the Vietnamese troop withdrawal from Cambodia up to the present time.

3. At BBC's request, the bureau provided several samples of messages broadcast by Radio Television Hong Kong in Vietnamese advising Vietnamese boat people that the Hong Kong Government has promulgated a new policy on them, that they no longer have any hope of settling in the West, and will be repatriated to Vietnam.

4. Several requests for items were fulfilled for AG, the Embassy Political Section, DAO, USIS, VOA, and the embassies in Jakarta and Vientiane.

D. Technical

1. The bureau continues awaiting parts to put its satellite dishes back in full operation following the devastating lightning strike on them back on 23 September. Of those parts that have been received, two of the boards for the Monitor dish ACU were found to have the same defects that they had when the bureau sent them back to be repaired in 1986.

2. In order to beef up the satellite antennas' lightning protection system, arrestors were connected to each phase of the main power cables to the Bang Ping operations building and the pedestals of the two satellite dishes.

3. A new Microtel satellite receiver was installed at Bang Ping to improve the coverage of All-India Radio.

E. Cruising

1. Until the necessary parts are received from Headquarters to return the two satellite dishes to full operation, the Analyst Dish remains fixed on the 60E satellite while the Operations Dish can be moved manually for coverage other than on the 60E and for cruising purposes.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

1. South Asian Unit Chief [] received a message STAT of congratulations from Acting FBIS Director [] and the STAT plaudits of the bureau in recognition of his 30th anniversary with FBIS.

B. Building and Grounds

1. Following completion of the retaining wall at Bang Ping, a total of 960 square meters of fill was added and graded and sodded over to improve the general appearance of the receiver site.

2. A total 450 square meters of Bang Ping access road was covered with asphalt.

IV. VISITS

A. To the Bureau

1. LEC contractor Fred Kopp 19 October-1 November.

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Chief, Bangkok Bureau